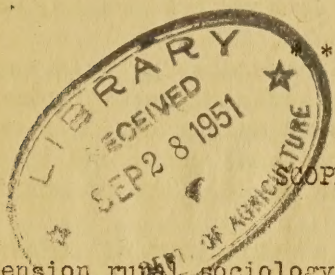


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HIGHLIGHTS OF EXTENSION EDUCATION, 1950-51,
IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND RURAL SOCIOLOGY

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SCOPE AND STATUS

1. Extension rural sociology is an old program, but new generally and broader in concept. Several States have had projects in this field for 25 years - New York, Virginia, Ohio, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa. Mississippi was busy with helping organize community farm groups in the early 20's, as were several other States. The community approach to extension work through the organization of community clubs was being used in West Virginia by the late Nat Frame, director of extension work there, and he developed a community score card. The community council idea was being promoted by Kenyon L. Butterfield, E. L. Morgan and others during the same time. Community institutes were a main extension method throughout the country.

But these community efforts slowed down after a few years. Probably this was due mainly to the rise of special interest organizations, the advent of the automobile and development of the county-seat town, and the increased tendency to focus on technical subject-matter which came with the rapid developments in plant and animal sciences and farm and home technology. The community work was not generally known as rural sociology. At the same time, extension projects under the name of rural sociology were also developing in several States. And recreation became one of the main points of departure for this new extension rural sociology or "rural betterment" as it was somewhat thought of, largely because of the demand from rural people and organizations for recreation work, once it got started. As things turned out, rural sociology became somewhat identified as recreation, and recreation as sociology, which retarded each from contributing to its fullest possibilities in extension work.

By E. J. Niederfrank, extension specialist in community organization and rural sociology, United States Department of Agriculture, from State annual plans of work, annual reports, and other information.

But the development of scientific rural sociology with the expansion of resident-teaching and research in the field, especially after 1935, made the distinction between it and recreation more clear. Today, rural sociology is the science of human relations and group life with particular reference to rural people and rural areas. It deals with the organization of rural life in regard to kinds and functioning of groups and communities, attitudes and customs, population trends, leadership, standards of living, community services, and group and community processes. Thus, it is in a position to contribute in various ways to extension methods and to community improvement.

Extension rural sociology deals with the applied aspects of these topics, and it reaches out to also apply information about education methods, psychology, and anthropology. It gives particular attention to such problems as how to motivate people in unserved areas or groups, how to increase the participation of people in organizations, how to find and develop leadership, how to identify the natural groups and leaders among the people, how to help analyze their needs and work out means of organization and programs for bringing about various improvements, helping churches and schools adjust to community trends, methods for improving organization meetings and making stronger organizations, use of discussion techniques for better educational work, and information about social aspects of public policies, population trends, and community changes.

2. Today, 25 States offer the benefit of this kind of information and assistance to their extension staffs and the people either on a part-time or a full-time project basis. In addition several other States draw upon teaching and research staffs for extension assistance in this field. It is more than 20 years old in 8 of the 25 States, and less than 6 years old in 15 States.

3. There is a definite upward trend of interest and emphasis on community development and working together. This is true throughout the country. In the South the community improvement organization type of program is spreading into more States - Virginia, Mississippi, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas - and the already-existing specialized projects in this field in Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama are moving ahead with continued success. This expansion is especially timely in view of the rapid trend toward diversified farming and industry, and the growth of towns in this region.

The community work of projects in the Northern States deals more with community councils, community planning in connection with special problems, experimental or demonstration communities, getting more community approach into extension work, combining extension committees for more over-all planning and program activities, and building relationships with other groups or agencies for work on common problems through formation of interagency councils or committees, interagency workshops or conferences, and aid to agencies or groups individually.

More teamwork, joint planning, and working together are developing at both local and State levels. Rural leaders are interested in it and so are organizations and public agencies. Community needs and problems of leadership and organization are being brought up more and more by the people in county extension planning meetings.

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4. Defense mobilization raised new questions, and there was need to help the people make adjustments. More agencies and programs were or would be set up, and the people needed to know about them. There was the question of dovetailing new programs with present programs as much as possible, and of helping people understand developments and issues so as to clarify confusion, maintain morale, and help them to best adjust organization and community plans to changing programs and conditions. The development of defense mobilization accentuated the need for understanding and teamwork. People were remembering recent past experiences during World War II, and would want things handled as efficiently as possible this time. Various organizations were wanting to do what they could to help further the defense effort. Joint community action was stimulated through the fact that various groups were or would be having a part in defense effort or would be affected by it, therefore, would be interested in working together in one way or another. Interagency relationships - local and State - were now going to be more important than ever.

There would be also a need for developing more volunteer leadership, and at a time when people were going to be busier than usual. Special effort was made to get needed defense information injected into community meetings. County and community groups were concerned about altering programs to best serve the new situation without jeopardizing their own plans too much. Health and recreation problems arose. Many communities also found themselves still in the process of trying to complete school reorganization or make other adjustments after the end of the last war.

The defense effort was seen as being in the interest of everybody. It was going to be important to have the participation of every community and family down the road.

The Extension Service, and the special projects in community organization and rural sociology, undertook during the year to help the people meet these challenges through service to extension staffs, State and local groups, and rural leaders. The general attitude of the people was to go on as usual, with emphasis not on making wholesale changes or setting up new plans, but on adjusting current programs and methods to meet new needs as they arose. The need for effective organization of programs locally, and for teamwork between agencies and groups, became more and more apparent as the year progressed. It was a time when it would be especially helpful to know more about the experiences along these lines of the last war, and in several States extension rural sociologists undertook studies or in other ways helped analyze past experiences to have as a guide for the best planning this time.

5. Other factors in the setting. The Rural Sociological Society in cooperation with the Farm Foundation completed a study of rural sociology in the land-grant colleges during the year. This stimulated interest in self-improvement and increased demand for a workshop or conference of some kind on extension rural sociology where specialists might get together to exchange ideas on programs and methods and obtain new information. The Rural Sociological Society, made up primarily of teachers and researchers, has increased its interest in extension rural sociology and community organization. A short workshop on community organization work in the Southern States was held during the year in conjunction with the 48th annual meeting of the Southern Agricultural Workers Association at Memphis. Plans are underway for an even larger program along the line the coming year.

Good relationships with national and State church bodies, school organizations, library associations, and welfare agencies have continued. Extension sociologists in several States helped considerably with conducting the CROP, CARE, and other special welfare programs in rural areas. Expansion of programs in health and recreation also increased demand for sociology and organization assistance.

Extension workers, faced with problems of how to reach as many people as possible with a variety of programs, are asking for and using sociological information more than ever before. In-service training workshops, summer schools, extension evaluation studies, new researches, and accumulating extension sociology activities, have shown its applications and increased interest in it.

Another factor in the setting is that both resident-teaching and research in rural sociology have steadily expanded. More and more research information of significance to extension work has been completed during recent years or is underway. More and more researches are turned to extension problems, or are being designed so as to contribute to extension work and other uses. Increased work in public policy education is beginning to increase interest in discussion methods, and in sociological analysis of public policies and programs. Increased interest in serving the problems of aging and retired people, and in juvenile delinquency and crime, also are producing new requests for sociological information and assistance.

Agencies interested in furthering extension work and other programs in underdeveloped areas of the World recognize the importance of understanding people and gearing programs to local values and organization. They have been increasingly observing and asking for information about these aspects of extension work in the United States. Several extension rural sociologists in this country have made notable contributions to various assistance programs in foreign countries. All this sharing of experiences with others helps us to appreciate the significance of our own work in this field and gives us courage for further development.

STATE PROGRAMS

According to the Combined Annual Reports of County Extension Workers for 1950, assistance was given during the year to over 30,000 communities in improving recreation facilities, over 55,000 community groups in organization problems, programs, and meetings, nearly 7000 communities in obtaining library services, nearly 2300 communities in building community houses, and nearly 8000 communities in improving schoolgrounds or other community areas. In many cases State specialists contributed to these accomplishments in one way or another.

A fuller picture of extension rural sociology and community improvement, as it is carried on in the States which provide it, is given in the next paragraphs, including types and examples of activities, accomplishments, and some new or special developments.

Problems and Fields of Work - in approximate order of importance or frequency.

1. Community organization and improvement - to help the people by their own group efforts meet needs and problems which concern them as a community group, and provide means for their obtaining extension and other programs.
2. Rural Church and Other Institutions - to help the people look after their churches, schools, and other institutions of community living.
3. Making organizations more effective and improving meetings - to increase participation and service.
4. Development of Leadership and Organization - to implement programs, conserve effort, strengthen rural life, and help people in growth of personality.
5. Staff service on social aspects of extension problems, such as how to increase participation of people in extension programs, how to strengthen program planning methods, and how to obtain wider adoption of recommended practices.
6. Development of the Use of Discussion Methods and Group Processes - to help add interest to meetings, increase learning, increase participation of the people and strengthen practice of democracy.
7. Miscellaneous Social Science Information and Public Policy Education - to help the people know about and analyze current facts such as population trends, community changes, and social policies like social security, health, education, and agricultural prices.

Examples of extension work in rural sociology and community organization in the States during 1950.

Some States emphasize certain fields and some emphasize others. Four types are selected. In Georgia, the entire program is centered around community development, primarily through the organization of "community improvement associations" or "community clubs". Each embraces a small community or neighborhood, and most of the groups range from 40 to 75 families. They have a regular set of officers and committees, have regular meetings of educational-social nature for all members of the family, and carry on various projects for farm, home and community improvement. About 250 communities are so organized in 60 counties of three trade areas of the State - around Atlanta, Columbus, and Chattanooga just across the line in Tennessee.

The program is carried on cooperatively with commercial groups who sponsor community development contests on a county basis and the larger trade area basis. Major objectives of the community development program are: (1) to encourage individual rural families to make improvements in homes and farms, (2) to encourage families to work together to get services and carry on activities that are not possible by families working alone, (3) to encourage development of rural leadership, and (4) to foster better rural-urban relations.

Last year in Olive Branch, Georgia, a community of only 17 families, cooperative efforts of this kind resulted in 7 new bathrooms, 9 new or remodeled kitchens, 11 kitchens with hot water, 4 new washing machines, 7 refrigerators, 2 new Sunday School rooms, repainting of the church, and nearly 100 percent increase in attendance of church, and pastures improved and livestock increased on all the farms in the community. In another community, accomplishments of the community club included 80 percent increase in Home Demonstration club membership, renovated church and grounds with 200 percent increase in Sunday School attendance, a school lunch room added and a program inaugurated, food processing services made available on a cooperative basis, a new 4-H club, reduction of idle crop acreage and increases in winter pasture, improved permanent pasture, use of lime and phosphate, and annual lespedeza, an increase of 30 purebred cattle among the farmers, improved machinery made available on a cooperative basis, an increase of 6800 quarts of canned fruits and vegetables for home use, 17 new year-round home gardens, all families more conscious of the relationship between the kind of food they eat and their health, an increase of 16 homes with hot water in the kitchen, 18 homes with electricity for first time, and 24 homes with washing machines. Country and town people met together on several occasions. Through the improvement program, the banker and other business people learned more about what farm families were trying to do, so could help them better.

A chief feature of this program is that it is tied in as a regular part of extension work. The community organization or clubs provide an excellent means by which the extension agents can supply information to the people. It is easier for the extension agents and more people are likely to be reached and influenced, because it is their own program. Each county has an over-all program which outlines county-wide things that need special attention or might be stressed, and this serves as a guide to communities for their program planning. County extension program planning consists of community planning meetings, and their representatives from the different community clubs or neighborhoods make up a county program planning committee.

The principal function of the specialist is encouraging and helping county extension workers organize the communities of their county, giving guidance to the community organizations, and training leadership. In 1950, 13 training meetings on community work were held for county agricultural and home agents, 74 training meetings for community leaders attended by nearly 2500; also 2 tours of winning communities, 10 radio programs, and publication of the bulletin "Community Development In Georgia."

A similar program is underway in most of the other Southern States.

Another type of program in extension rural sociology is shown by the examples of Iowa and Wisconsin. Here, too, much emphasis is on community development but in a different way. Special attention is given to encouraging and aiding with the development of community councils and other forms of community action for meeting particular problems or making improvements, often through aid to individual communities over a period of time on a pilot or experimental basis. The specialists in both States each have been working with about 7 or 8 communities on this basis, and these communities have accomplished much over a period of a couple of years - school lunch programs, improvement of churches, participation of farmers in extension programs, more home demonstration clubs, increase in 4-H club membership, soil conservation, reforestation, improvement of roads, streets, and street lighting, recreation facilities and activities, analysis of school reorganization problems, new co-ops, construction of local hospitals or hospitals and the obtaining of doctors, sponsored chest X-ray and clinics, establishment of driving lessons in the school, community fairs or festivals, solved parking problems, improved relations between town and country people, and many other improvements. Guidesheets for analyzing community needs and working out plans of action were prepared and widely used in Iowa.

Much work is with State agencies or organizations and interagency groups, encouraging and aiding them in the adaptation of programs to community conditions and in working together on certain programs. Iowa has the Iowa Council for Community Improvement, the Iowa Christian Rural Fellowship, and the Iowa Council for Better Education, while Wisconsin has the Wisconsin Community Organization Committee, the Wisconsin Public Health Council and several others. This year the Iowa Christian Rural Fellowship initiated a State-wide program of church beautification through the various groups making up the fellowship, and also the idea of county institutes on soil conservation where rural pastors and other community leaders would meet with specialists and learn about this problem in their counties and help carry the information back to the people in their churches and contacts with farm families. State or district workshops on community development have also been held in Iowa for a number of years, attended by hundreds of community leaders and agency workers. From these have stemmed many community endeavors and State programs of one kind or another.

Rural pastors' schools and sessions on church and community in Farm and Home Week programs of the agricultural colleges, were also held in both States. Observance of Rural Life Sunday is encouraged, through which soil conservation, 4-H club work and other ideas are furthered. All these activities do much to build relationships for the Extension Service with other agencies. And this helps to foster extension work throughout the State as well as help to solve rural problems of community nature beyond farm and home technology.

Incidental assistance is also given extension staffs. In Wisconsin, for example, 10 counties asked the specialist during the course of the year to come to their counties and sit down with the staff for a day or two to help them analyze their county and work out improvements in extension methods and programs. In Iowa monthly "program service" leaflet is prepared which goes to hundreds of local extension units and other community leaders upon

their request. The specialist also meets in county meetings with township extension units to help them develop county and township programs for the year ahead. Youth organizations, extension health projects, and other programs frequently call for special assistance or counsel. In Wisconsin the specialist also teaches the departmental course in Community Organization, and advises graduate students on this and their extension studies.

Still another example is Ohio, where emphasis is on teaching discussion methods, group self-analysis and planning, analysis of public issues and policies, and leadership training for improvement of organizations and meetings. This is based on the concept that development of people and communities is basically an educational process and growth, through the people doing their own thinking. Central focus is on helping organize and use our resources for better living as families and keeping in mind the question of how the extension program as a whole can best help individuals and families feel at home and take their rightful part in a changing world.

One of the main activities of the Ohio State specialists in rural sociology is through county and district leadership schools, where officers and leaders of 4-H clubs, home demonstration groups, and farm and community organization come to learn ideas and methods about making organizations more effective, strengthen leadership, and improve meetings. In 1950, 22 such leadership training schools were held with over 2500 people attending. Topics dealt with included planning and conducting meetings, parliamentary procedure, getting audience participation, leading discussions, handling different kinds of audiences, getting where to find and how to use program materials, how to handle controversial issues, and analysis of local, State, national and international problems. Such information is also taught in work with special groups, such as Grange lecturers, rural pastors, and by individual counseling and staff conferences. About 15 recreation leadership schools for meetings with 1500 people attending were also held. Such assistance is given to extension 1-day community institutes of which about 400 are held annually in Ohio. 1/

The Ohio program also includes assistance to rural pastors' schools, to observance of Rural Life Sunday, to rural church conferences, and to building relationships and carrying on cooperative program with various State agencies and private groups such as departments of health and welfare, Farm Bureau, and cooperative organizations. These relationships and services help the public relations of the Extension Service and they also help to improve rural living.

Special assistance was given the extension health program, which was attached to the extension rural sociology office, and to the extension young men's and women's program, and to State and national church bodies and other groups. The residence college course in Rural Sociology was also taught

1/ The Ohio program has made much contribution in the United States to the development of the use of the small-group type of discussion, the agree-disagree check sheet, and other discussion techniques.

by one of the extension sociologists in 1950. Among the circulars prepared were "It's Fun To Be A Chairman," "Organizing Your County Resources For Better Living In The Family," - a discussion outline, "Elements of Program Planning," "Some Things Every Chairman Should Know," and numerous articles or information was prepared for other publications.

Still another type of emphasis in extension rural sociology is shown by the example of Michigan State. Here emphasis is on staff service in social science, primarily through studies of leadership patterns, problem areas, and community analysis, and through teaching group techniques and application of social science to extension problems. Four extension studies were carried on in 1950, and much attention was also given to two health studies. One of these was a study of community health projects of 450 communities located in all parts of the United States, which was carried on in cooperation with the Farm Foundation. Study under auspices of the Soil Conservation Service, were also made on the identification and use of "natural" neighbor groups and leaders in obtaining adoption of soil conservation practices by farmers.

Project teaching activities of the Michigan State program consist primarily of teaching the findings of studies and applications of social science principles and information at workshops or conferences and individual counseling for extension staffs and for other groups other than extension, such as the Grange, church bodies, and the Soil Conservation Service. Another major activity in 1950 was helping to plan and conduct the fourth annual rural leadership school for pastors, and guiding the college committee on rural church program which was set up to study this phase of extension work. The leadership school - 2 weeks in length - had an enrollment of 91 pastors from 21 States, and courses taught included group methods, community organization, rural church programs, home and family living, intergroup relations, social and mental health, conservation and stewardship, economic life and the church, and making rural community surveys. Some 1-day county rural life institutes were also aided. Assistance was also given to State and county land-use planning committees, to various State and county welfare training projects in cooperation with various public and private agencies, and to the State extension program in health and safety.

The health and safety program, also with a full-time specialist, is attached to the extension project in rural sociology. Another feature of Michigan State is the close relationship between extension research and teaching in sociology, and anthropology. All the staff assist with all three branches of the department work.

Minnesota's program is an example of one which was devoted almost entirely to staff service. Aid was given in 1950 to nearly 40 county extension staffs and leader groups on one or more of the following topics or extension problems: analysis of census data on population, production, and level of living; re-vitalizing county home and community committees; projecting the legume program through neighborhood discussion groups; preparing discussion guide sheets for

use in teaching of particular farm or home programs; assisting with 4-H program planning; program planning training for farm organization groups; how to use discussion in community and county home demonstration program planning; training in use of discussion methods in handling public problems; analysis of county situations and devising of surveys and discussion guides to determine farm family thinking for use in planning the county extension program; and explanation of extension organization and relationships to rural groups and extension agents. Special attention was given to helping new agents on these problems. In Texas, which has 254 counties, staff service in organization is also the main field of work of the extension organization specialist, who is attached to the home demonstration staff and devotes almost here entire time to assisting the home demonstration agents and county and State home demonstration councils on organization phases of their work.

The above paragraphs describe quite fully extension work in rural sociology and community developments as carried on in several States, illustrating somewhat different fields of emphasis. Similar programs are underway with varying degrees of extent in one or more of all the other States having projects in this field. Major emphasis in 13 States is on general organization problems, leadership, discussion methods, community analysis and service to the extension staffs, on these topics, in 6 States the major activities are on work with rural churches, State relationships, and general community development; and in 6 other States - in the South - emphasis is on encouraging and assisting the "community improvement association" type of program.

New and Special Developments

1. Experimental study and pilot demonstration of the community approach to planning and carrying on extension programs and other programs. (New York and Illinois)
2. County 1-day rural life institutes bringing together pastors with professional workers of various agencies and programs. (Virginia)
3. State committees or groups on community organization and development. (Iowa and Wisconsin)
4. State 3-day workshop on community development bringing together local leaders and State agency workers. (Iowa)
5. State or district 1-day conferences on community action and development. (Iowa and Mississippi)
6. Rural church appraisal committee, appointed by the dean to study various aspects of college assistance in the field of the rural church and make recommendations for improvement of this program. (Michigan)

7. "Community club" organizations aided by having a county general program, developed by a county planning committee made up of representatives from various community clubs and neighborhoods. (Georgia)
8. Wide participation of State extension staff in community organization and improvement program, with various specialists helping communities organize and helping with the judging of the community improvement contests. (Tennessee)
9. Studies of urban fringe areas and part-time farm families to help guide development of extension work. (Indiana and Oregon)
10. District 3-day workshop on application of social science principles and information to extension problem and methods. One feature was a half-day of field work on community analysis with the participants going by teams to different neighborhoods and making personal interviews. (Michigan)
11. Intensive work in experimental or pilot communities. (Wisconsin)
12. Certificates awarded churches for outstanding programs and service to community. (Iowa, Kentucky, Mississippi)
13. Special work on development of county extension program planning procedures and formation of county planning committees. (Minnesota, Utah, Washington)
14. Special work with migratory labor camps and on laborer-farmer relationships and training. (New York)
15. Study of 4-H leadership problems by survey of adult leaders prior to leader training meetings. (Utah)
16. Full-time given to organization work with home demonstration clubs and councils. (Texas)
17. Radio and farm group lectures on personality development, family life, community improvement and social aspects of public policies. (Rhode Island)
18. Study of experiences of county extension services in work with Selective Service and on farm labor during World War II, on a guide for helping improve such cooperative work this time. (Maryland)
19. County community councils made up of representatives from the local community improvement associations and various agencies. (Tennessee)

Extension education in rural health services is attached to the department of sociology in New York, Michigan, and Washington, but not by title of specialist. Extension recreation is attached to extension rural sociology in Ohio, Wisconsin, and Louisiana - also in New York - but not by title of specialist. The extension work in rural sociology and community development are administratively an integral part of the college department or section of rural sociology in 10 States - Rhode Island, New York, Maryland, Mississippi, Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Utah. It is also a part of extension agricultural economics in 4 States - Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois.

ROLE AND ACTIVITIES OF FEDERAL OFFICE

The role the federal office in extension rural sociology and community development is to national bodies and State extension services much like what the role is of the State extension services in relation to other State agencies and the county extension services. It is a role of indirect leadership, general training, and consultation service or assistance. Major activities center around helping the States with their programs; keeping abreast of proposed legislation, new programs, research, and educational developments of concern to the field; servicing federal staff members and agencies, maintaining relations and rendering services to national agencies and meetings; and administering annual plans of work and annual reports of the State extension projects on this subject.

But the activities of the federal office are necessarily quite limited. Only one specialist is assigned to this project and it is combined with extension recreation, and during the last year it also included the work in rural health services due to the illness and death of Miss Elin L. Anderson. Thus, each of these 3 fields has had the equivalent of only about 1/3 man-time. While the total number of State projects are not unduly large, the servicing of federal staff members and the various committees and national activities connected with each field takes more than its proportionate time.

A major activity of the federal specialist in connection with the rural sociology and community development project was assistance to the States. During the last two years, projects were visited or special activities assisted in 19 States. These were New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, Louisiana, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Montana, Idaho and Washington. Most of these contacts were from 3 days to two weeks, including in some cases work on recreation and health projects in the same States. They include field visits, work in communities and counties, participation in conference meetings and workshops, and conferences held with staff committees and individuals. The work in Montana and Idaho involved a study of 4-H club work.

Another activity is the service to the federal staff and to other agencies in work with various committees, individual counseling, and assistance to various conferences, workshops or other special activities. Conferences assisted include the extension family life conference following the Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth (December 1950), the home demonstration conference on "Strengthening Homes In The Emergency" (April 1951), and the section on rural sociology program in the 1951 meeting of the Southern Agricultural Workers' Association (February 1951). The specialist is a member of the Farm Foundation's church committee on land tenure, the town and country church committee of the National Council of Churches, and a consultant to the Virginia Methodist Church town and country church commission. Other committees and agencies are assisted in connection with the extension recreation and health projects. Relations are maintained with the Rural Sociological Society and its annual meetings attended, at which time special conferences are held with extension sociologists attending.

Within the federal extension service, counsel is exchanged frequently, especially in connection with field studies and training. Occasionally, assistance has been given in meeting with foreign youth, and counseling with foreign technical trainees and staff members of the Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations. The project has a particular interest in the group work of the Soil Conservation Service, and information or assistance is exchanged on occasion.

Quarterly circular letters were sent to State extension specialists and departments of rural sociology. Other items prepared included "Farm People and Social Security", "Information for Extension Agents on Social Security", "Rural Areas and Defense Programs", "Brief Description of Extension Work in Rural Sociology and Community Development", "Effective Meetings and Discussions", "Challenges of the Changing Community and Town-Country Churches", "Planning Recreation In Rural Home and Community", and summaries of various workshops or conferences, such as "Community Improvement Program In The Southern States" and "What Makes A Health Council Tick". Published materials on State programs, researches, and other pertinent information assembled were also sent out or provided upon request. Special attention was given to including items in circular letters and sending published materials which would encourage and help make program adjustments and contribute to the defense effort.

During the year several items were prepared for the Director's Weekly Letter, and numerous articles checked for the Extension Service Review. Pertinent information on rural sociology and community improvement were also included on numerous occasions in connection with the recreation and health programs, as all three of these fields are related. Many persons have written or visited the office for subject-matter information and to discuss rural life.

Through all these activities the federal office endeavors gladly to provide what measure of leadership and assistance it can. Relations with other staff divisions and personnel of the Extension Service, and of other bureaus or agencies concerned with the subject, are excellent and assistance is given as much as possible. Extension work to help people improve living is the job of all programs and all staffs - county, State, and federal. The work of each contributes to the total, directly or indirectly. Rural sociology and community development has its part.

A LOOK AHEAD

Progress of extension rural sociology and community development has been steady and significant. There is continued growing interest in the application of sociological information to extension problems and other programs, in order that as many people as possible may be served. This with continued successful extension assistance in rural sociology will stimulate even further progress. The same is true of community organization and development. There is generally increased interest and activity in this field. Rural people are thinking about community aspects of their farming and home-making and family-community living more than ever before. They want to have their communities good places to live in. They know that this not only improves living, but makes their properties worth more. They also want effective handling of programs and services. There will be increased interest in the family farm idea, and in desiring to serve all rural families.

Building group relationships and cooperative effort between groups is an especially vital function today, and it is becoming more and more common. It is not only a part of better services and good feeling; it is a part of the democracy way and of building enduring World Order. We are in a tremendously significant period. Great developments of national and world importance, affecting the lives of all people and perhaps all of history, will be taking place. Rural people will want to think about them. Local leadership and community effort will continue to be significant, because they are fundamentally important in our society, and in the issues of the time.

A statement once made by Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt is pertinent. She said that "two major political ideas are before the world today - communism and democracy. The basic issue of the time is the choice between them. The representatives of the former are going to work hard to try to prove that it can most effectively serve the people of the world. The representatives of democracy have to work just as hard to prove and obtain the acceptance of their way. The battle is going to be won or lost in the individual communities of this the greatest democracy of the world. Our willingness to accept responsibility toward this in our community will in the long run be the deciding factor in the battle for the future." And someone else said, "While there is the military front, there is also the home front where it is a question of mobilizing the minds of men for the things that can contribute to better living to be developed by voluntary effort."

We are in for a long pull - the pull to demonstrate the fact that democracy is the kind of life that we want, and that it can be effective in meeting emergencies and problems of today - in our own localities and across the nation and world. If we are in for a long pull to demonstrate that, then we need a maximum of understanding and cooperative group effort on the part of all our people in every community.

The above paragraphs contain the ideas that undergird and guide the extension work in rural sociology and community development. It is contributing to the main objectives - to better extension, to better rural living, to the success of democracy. We have behind us an accumulation of success and a growing demand for more assistance along this line.

Four areas of emphasis stand out for the next few years. These are:

1. Community organization and development - doing things the community way, helping people work out improvements and deal with problems which they have as community groups. We will want to keep in mind that this program should not be thought of as an exclusive program, but one closely related to other projects - farm management, live-stock production, soil conservation and all the rest, for they contribute to community development and community organization and development contributes to them.
2. Assistance in strengthening extension organization, leadership, program planning and teaching methods. We will want to give special attention to helping extension staff members analyze their counties, know the natural channels of communication and leadership, and implement family and community approaches. These approaches, are going to be used more and more. The Soil Conservation Service, for example, is endeavoring to use these approaches and especially the "neighbor group" method. We should work together with them on this. Getting soil and water conservation practices adopted on farms is one of rural America's great needs, and has a definite relation to community development and family living.
3. Analysis and interpretation of social changes, including population trends, community changes, affects or changes in farming and home-making, and attitudes.
4. Analysis and interpretation pertaining to public policies and programs - local, State, and national. During the next few years there will be major proposals and developments up for discussion on such topics as schools, health, social security, agricultural adjustments, labor, and family farm, as well as international issues.

We need the assistance of more research information. Some of the main problems on which we need more study are:

Is there a definite lessening of contacts and ties with the immediate local community, or can we build community organization soundly on it? What basis is needed in order to soundly build community improvement clubs or other community organization?

Effects of suburbanization and industrialization of towns upon the people and the possibilities for community organization.

What are the essential criteria for successful functioning of community organization - the factors and principles that contribute to success?

What is the desirable role and activities of outside leadership or assistance in stimulating and carrying on community organization and improvement?

What makes for good results in educational leadership training meetings, community meetings, leading discussions?

How can people be aroused to more interest in effective community organization and development? What are effective ways of initiating programs at the grass roots? What attitudes of the people must be taken into account?

Comparison and effectiveness of community loyalty versus commodity loyalty? Factors in town-country relations?

The role of values and attitudes of the people, and how to deal with or take into account?

Basic factors influencing standards or desires of living, participation of people in programs, and adoption of practices?

How can we better determine the real interests and wants of the people, and build better program plans?

How can family and community approaches be better implemented?

What are values and drawbacks of building relationships between groups and programs, and how can it be done?

How can we better evaluate and report on activities and accomplishments of educational work in community development and rural sociology? How can we better evaluate and report on accomplishments of the people and their community programs? What is improvement of rural living?

Closer relationships between research and extension will facilitate more research that will be useful in extension programs. At the same time we extension specialists ourselves must be analytical minded as we go along. Extension sociologists should do, or have some part in, planning and carrying out of some research each year. It strengthens us in subject-matter and it helps to keep the research problem-centered.

Close relationship with teaching also helps both the teaching and the extension. We need resident-teaching which will equip students with sufficient skills and understanding to enable them to be effective leaders wherever they may be, and to see the social aspects of their problems and know where to come for further assistance. We need graduate training which will produce teachers and research who can see extension problems.

Another need is in-service training of the extension specialists in rural sociology and community organization. There has been no get together of them of any kind during recent years, and many of them are new in the work. The Farm Foundation and the Rural Sociological Society are to be complimented for their interest in this. Regional or national committees among land-grant college administrators and leaders in the field are being organized. It is hoped that out of this interest and organization there may come some kind of a conference or workshop on extension rural sociology and community development in the not too distant future. It is needed badly. Special training for the community organization and improvement program in the Southern States has also been requested by State specialists, and it is greatly needed. Conference or workshop training opportunities from time to time would enable the specialists to become better acquainted, exchange ideas and programs, and obtain new information from researches and about group techniques or other developments.

The future also appears to offer new and expanding rural problems and conditions of interest to extension rural sociology and community development. Rural and urban differences are diminishing. At the same time the society of rural people is becoming more complex, due to increased shifting of populations and increased diversity of interests. Public and private programs will more likely increase in number and content. There will be greater need than ever for finding common ground, and then for building on it to give certainty and to achieve desired results.

The uniqueness of rural sociology and community development is that it deals with people - the person, the family, and the group. It sees and deals with building relationships in all its phases. It sees and deals with the human approach and of gearing things to the people as they are. This uniqueness is its forte.

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